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The situation in the Middle East

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Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in pursuance of General Assembly resolutions 53/37 and 53/38 of 2 December 1998. The General Assembly, by resolution 53/37, which deals with the transfer by some States of their diplomatic missions to Jerusalem in violation of Security Council resolution 478 (1980) of 20 August 1980, called once more upon those States to abide by the provisions of the relevant United Nations resolutions. By resolution 53/38, which deals with Israeli policies in the Syrian territory occupied by Israel since 1967, the General Assembly demanded once more that Israel withdraw from all the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967 in implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

2. The Secretary-General, in order to fulfil his reporting responsibility under the above-mentioned resolutions, on 28 July 1999 addressed notes verbales to the Permanent Representative of Israel and to the permanent representatives of the other Member States, requesting them to inform him of any steps their Governments had taken or envisaged taking concerning the implementation of the relevant provisions of those resolutions. As at 18 October 1999, replies had been received from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Guyana, Jordan, Qatar and the Russian Federation. Those replies are reproduced in section II of the present report.

II. Replies from Member States

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

[Original: English]

1. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains committed to full and early implementation of General Assembly resolutions 53/37 and 53/38 and has not taken any measures that contravene them.

2. With regard to resolution 53/37, we are opposed to any acts on the part of Israel to change the demographic composition in Jerusalem and urge Israel to bring to an end the settlement project therein.

3. As regards resolution 53/38, we are of the view that peace is incompatible with occupation and, therefore, Israel should withdraw from the Syrian Golan unconditionally, as demanded by the international community. We also hope that the issue of ensuring peace in the Middle East will be resolved comprehensively on the basis of the principle "land for peace".

Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]

1. The Permanent Mission of Ecuador wishes to state that Ecuador firmly supports the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes and therefore encourages further

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negotiations in this area with a view to finding a speedy and peaceful solution to the territorial problems in the region. Ecuador also rejects the occupation of territory by force, the violation of human rights and terrorist acts of any type.

2. In this context, the Ecuadorean delegation, which took part in the fifty-third session of the General Assembly, voted in favour of General Assembly resolutions 53/37 and 53/38, entitled, respectively, "Jerusalem" and "The situation in the Middle East: the Syrian Golan", which were adopted under the agenda item entitled "The situation in the Middle East".

3. Lastly, it should be noted that the Government of Ecuador maintains its diplomatic representation in the city of Tel Aviv.

Guyana

[Original: English]

The Government of Guyana has complied with both resolutions and supports them entirely. Guyana does not propose to establish a diplomatic mission in Jerusalem in violation of Security Council resolution 478 (1980). Guyana has also supported all efforts to ensure the resumption of the peace process and its success.

Jordan

[Original: Arabic]

1. Jordan rejects any Israeli measures taken within the City of Jerusalem that strengthen Israel's illegitimate authority in the territories it occupied in 1967. With regard to this matter, Jordan brings pressure to bear, through the diplomatic and legal channels available to it under international law and in accordance with the Jordanian-Israeli Treaty of Peace, with a view to halting the illegal Israeli practices and measures in the Holy City.

2. Jordan rejects any Israeli religious jurisdiction over the Islamic Holy Places and religious endowments in Jerusalem. Thus, because it is the party that is legally responsible for the administration of these Holy Places and endowments, Jordan performs its duties and discharges its obligations in terms of providing the necessary support to these Holy Places and endowments and their administration in a manner that is appropriate to countering Israeli domination of the Holy City.

3. Through the available diplomatic and legal channels, as well as in international forums, Jordan endeavours to oppose and halt abusive Israeli measures to withdraw the identity documents of Jordanian and Palestinian residents of Jerusalem, demolish their homes and drive them from the City by direct and indirect means, and to build settlements on occupied Arab land in violation of international law.

4. In every international and regional forum, Jordan is bringing diplomatic and legal pressure to bear on those countries that have transferred or intend to transfer their embassies in Israel to Jerusalem.

5. In cooperation with all the relevant parties, including the United Nations, Jordan will continue to implement the United Nations resolutions seeking to invalidate the illegal measures taken by Israel in Jerusalem.

6. In the context of the peace process, Jordan is endeavouring to achieve a comprehensive, lasting and just resolution of the Jerusalem issue in such a way as to ensure the legitimate rights of all parties in the City and bring an end to Israel's occupation of those parts of Jerusalem that it occupied in 1967.

7. Jordan remains committed to the resolutions adopted by the Security Council and General Assembly, in which the occupation and annexation of the Syrian Golan are deemed to be null and void and to have created no legal effects or acquired rights for Israel on the Syrian heights. Jordan will cooperate with the United Nations in the implementation of its resolutions on this question.

8. Jordan is bringing diplomatic and legal pressure to bear on Israel to comply with the Security Council resolutions on the question, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981.

9. Jordan would welcome any progress made on the Syrian-Israeli track in the peace process, and it will do all in its power to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace that ensures the rights of all parties and brings an end to the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan and to the measures taken by Israel to annex the area.

Qatar

[Original: English]

The State of Qatar supports the above-mentioned General Assembly resolutions and demands their implementation.

Russian Federation

[Original: Russian]

1. The Russian Federation firmly adheres to the principle that the acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible. It

considers East Jerusalem to be part of the Arab territory occupied since 1967 and does not recognize its annexation or the declaration of a "united" Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. This position is unchanged and has its basis in Security Council resolutions 252 (1968) of 21 May 1968 and 478 (1980) of 20 August 1980.

2. The Russian Federation bases its position on what was determined at the Madrid Peace Conference on the Middle East, that the fate of Jerusalem must be an element in Palestinian-Israeli talks on the final status of the Palestinian territories. Unilateral actions to change the current status of the City are inadmissible.

3. As a co-sponsor of the Middle East peace process, the Russian Federation welcomes the resumption on 13 September 1999 of the Palestinian-Israeli talks on the final status of the Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, and will facilitate in every possible way their advancement and successful conclusion.

4. With regard to the Golan Heights, the Russian Federation consistently advocates their return to Syria in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, on the basis of the "land for peace" principle. In our opinion, progress on the Syrian track could open the way for the desired solution to the problem of southern Lebanon, and could be of key importance for the establishment of a durable and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

5. As a co-sponsor, the Russian Federation intends to continue its efforts to secure the swiftest possible resumption of Syrian-Israeli talks on the basis of the results already achieved in the negotiations.